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ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for fuel and fuel additive dispensing is disclosed. In one embodiment of the invention, a programmable intermediary module is disposed in the path of communication of control and data signals between a fuel dispenser station and a point-of-sale (POS) controller subsystem. The intermediary module is programmable to intercept communications (control and data signals) transmitted between the dispenser and the POS controller, such that it can monitor, inject, intercept, filter, capture, convert, and/or modify communications between the fuel dispenser and the POS controller. The intermediary module enables various enhanced control, monitoring, and reporting functions to be performed remotely and automatically. Further, the intermediary module enables various retail transactions to be integrated into a conventional fueling transaction without the necessity of extensive modification to an existing POS control subsystem. Additionally, the system supports a variety of interactive, real-time promotional and advertising operations to be conducted at the fueling station. In the disclosed embodiment, the intermediary module is coupled to and programmed and controlled by a control module which itself is coupled by a link to a central server. The server is preferably Internet-connected, and may additionally be functionally coupled to a local or wide-area network associated with the fuel retailer.